

# Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**Date:** May 19, 2022  
**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Benjamin H. Pingree, PLACE Director  
**Subject:** Summary Minutes to Board of Directors Meeting of March 31, 2022

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## **MEMBERS PRESENT**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>CITY</b>
Commissioner Nick Maddox, Chair	Mayor John Dailey
Commissioner Kristin Dozier	Commissioner Curtis Richardson
Commissioner Carolyn Cummings	Commissioner Jeremy Matlow
Commissioner Brian Welch	Commissioner Jacqueline Porter
Commissioner Rick Minor	Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox
Commissioner Bill Proctor	
Commissioner Jimbo Jackson	

## **I. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

There were no agenda modifications. Ben Pingree, Director of PLACE, explained the agenda format stating that the only items for the meeting were the Receipt and File reports, the Informational Item that Commissioner Porter requested at the previous IA Board meeting, and the acceptance of the minutes from the February 24, 2022 meeting. Director Pingree stated that there would not be a presentation related to the Informational Item, but that staff was available to answer questions related to the materials provided.

## **II. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Public comments were received by email to Comments@BlueprintIA.org through 5:00 p.m. on March 30, 2022. All emails received were provided to the IA Board. Live comments were also taken in person and via WebEx during the meeting. The following comments were presented:

Max Epstein expressed concern about the updates being provided for Capital Cascades Project and public engagement.

## **III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS**

- Receipt and File:
  - Blueprint Infrastructure Quarterly Report
  - Blueprint Infrastructure Community Engagement Update

- Informational Item Regarding the Structure and Governance of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency and the Department of Planning, Land Management, and Community Enhancement (PLACE)

#### **IV. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Stanley Sims stated that he would like to see more minority-owned businesses and local businesses engaged in Blueprint projects.

Max Epstein expressed concern about the IMC public record disclosure requirements under the 2016 interlocal agreement. He suggested that the City and County review the IMC's sunshine requirements to ensure transparency and public confidence.

Commissioner Richardson requested that Susan Dawson, Blueprint Attorney, address the comments from Max Epstein and a letter from a citizen that was sent to the IA Board regarding Florida Sunshine Law and how it applies to the Intergovernmental Management Committee (IMC). Attorney Dawson explained that the IMC is not a board or commission within the meaning of and as defined under Florida Sunshine law. She stated that the IMC reviews and signs off on staff prepared memoranda which are subject to the State's public records laws, and that the IMC is not required to hold public meetings because it serves in a managerial capacity for Blueprint. Attorney Dawson explained that for the past 20 years, the IMC, comprised of the City Manager and the County Administrator, has served as managers supervising Blueprint operations pursuant to the Interlocal Agreement to ensure that staff is following the directives of the IA Board. She stated that the IMC does not make policy decisions as that is a function of the IA Board.

#### **V. CONSENT**

**Mayor Dailey moved, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Cox, to approve the Consent Agenda.**

**The motion passed 12-0 (weighted (70-0)).**

1. Approval of the February 24, 2022, Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board Meeting Minutes

Option 1: Approve the February 24, 2022, Meeting Minutes.

#### **VI. GENERAL BUSINESS**

There were no general business items discussed, and no actions were taken.

#### **VII. DIRECTOR DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Porter expressed concern about public control, accountability, and Florida Sunshine law compliance. Attorney Dawson explained the differences between the roles of the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Intergovernmental Management Committee. Attorney Dawson explained that all groups are subject to public record compliance and that the CAC holds public meetings because of its advisory role for the IA Board, while the

IMC does not hold public meetings because it operates in a managerial capacity for the Department of PLACE and staff. Commissioner Porter inquired about the process for how the agenda item makes it before the IA Board and whether it had been presented to the CAC and IMC before it came before the IA Board. Director Pingree explained how agenda items are developed by staff, routed for review to the IMC, then presented to the IA Board.

Commissioner Maddox stated that the structure and role of the IMC was clear to him based on the information presented in the informational item and that the role of the IMC appears to be managerial. He suggested that the confusion related to the roles of the IMC may be related to its name, "Intergovernmental Management Committee."

Stanley Sims was allotted another opportunity to be heard during Director Discussion and expressed concern about the internal processes of Blueprint stating that he believed he has not been treated the same as other business entities seeking financial assistance from the Office of Economic Vitality.

Commissioner Richardson expressed full faith and confidence in the Blueprint Attorney, Susan Dawson. He stated that he is confident in the advice and guidance that she provides to the Intergovernmental Agency.

Commissioner Proctor addressed the comments of Mr. Sims and expressed concerns about the review process for noncompetitive project applications and how projects come before the IA Board for review. Also, Commissioner Proctor voiced concern about the morale of the IA Board, the behavior of the Commissioners, and their treatment of one another.

Commissioner Matlow asked Director Pingree to provide an overview of his daily working relationship with the IMC. Director Pingree explained that the IMC serves as his executive supervisors and that he regularly reports to and interacts with the Assistant City Manager and Assistant County Administrator. Commissioner Matlow inquired about how policy recommendations are developed and how they are brought before the IA Board. Director Pingree explained that all policy recommendations are developed into agenda items, routed through the IMC for review, and presented before the IA Board for approval or direction: he reiterated that staff works at the direction of the IA Board and that the IMC serves as managers to ensure that the direction provided by the IA Board is fulfilled. Commissioner Matlow asked Director Pingree to explain his joint annual review process. Director Pingree explained that his review process is typical of any other review process. He stated that he completes a draft self-evaluation that is individually reviewed and revised by his supervisors before it is included in his annual performance review packet.

Commissioner Matlow requested examples and an explanation about how the Agency increases accountability and coordinated efficiency between the City and County. Director Pingree explained that the successful recruitment of Amazon to the Tallahassee area required extensive coordination between the City and County in a timely and efficient manner. Director Pingree directed Commissioner Matlow to the informational materials for additional examples.

Commissioner Matlow then inquired about the expenditure authority of the IMC and whether the IA Board had delegated its authority to IMC. Attorney Dawson explained that the Competitive Project Policy, which the IA Board approved, specifies that the IMC has approval authority for projects up to \$500,000, and anything above that amount must come before the IA Board for review and approval. She clarified that the policy delineates certain authorities between the IMC and IA Board but that the IA Board had not delegated or given away any of its authority.

Commissioner Matlow inquired about the Director's hiring process. County Administrator Vince Long, explained that Director Pingree was the only candidate for the position, that no one other than himself and the City Manager at the time were involved in the hiring of Mr. Pingree, and that Director Pingree was well qualified for the position at the time of interview. Administrator Long also provided an overview of the PLACE structure and how the penny sales tax is used in other communities throughout the state of Florida as compared to Tallahassee and Leon County. He explained that the interlocal agreement used to establish Blueprint is unique to the Tallahassee community and allows for organizational alignment for infrastructure and economic development projects between the City and the County. Finally, Commissioner Matlow asked whether there has been any coordination between Blueprint and former City Manager Rick Fernandez since he left his position with the County; both Director Pingree and County Administrator Long stated there had not been. Commissioner Matlow closed by expressing concern about the Blueprint governance structure, the hiring of Director Pingree, and the IMC's compliance with Florida Sunshine laws. Attorney Dawson expressed concern regarding the questioning being conducted.

Commissioner Williams-Cox expressed a desire to adjourn the meeting since there was no business items to be discussed and the agenda had been exhausted. Commissioner Maddox requested clarification about a motion to adjourn. Attorney Dawson stated that a motion to adjourn required a second and a simple majority to pass.

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Richardson**

**Passed 5-5 (weighted: 31-29)**

**Mayor Dailey, Commissioners Williams-Cox, Richardson, Maddox, Jackson, voted in favor of the motion to adjourn. Commissioners Matlow, Porter, Dozier, Minor, and Welch voted against the motion. Commissioners Cummings and Proctor were out of chambers.**

## **VIII. ADJOURN**

**The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.**

*The next Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for **May 19, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.***